

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CARACA 01666 172300Z
ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1239

S E C R E T CARACAS 1666

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (CARTER, JIMMY)
SUBJECT: THE PRESIDENT'S TRIP

REF: STATE 42626

1. THE GOV ACCEPTS MARCH 28-29 DATES FOR VISIT. WE
ARE MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER AND SECGEN PRESIDENCY
FEB 20 AND WILL REPORT GOV REACTION TO PROPOSED
PROGRAM, AS WELL AS OUR OWN COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS,
IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER. WE EXPECT SOME COUNTERPROPOSALS
AND SUGGESTIONS BY THE GOV.

2. VERIFICATIONS OF DRIVING TIMES ARE BEING PROVIDED
IN SEPTEL.

3. CONGRESS WILL BE IN SESSION AT THAT TIME, ALTHOUGH
THERE WILL BE AN EASTER RECESS, PROBABLY EXTENDING
THROUGH MARCH 27. HOWEVER, APPEARANCE BY PRESIDENT
CARTER WILL BE MAJOR DRAWING CARD, AND WE WOULD EXPECT
FULL ATTENDANCE.

4. REGARDING ACCOMMODATIONS, AS THE DEPARTMENT WELL
KNOWS, HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS HERE ARE EXTREMELY TIGHT.
WE WILL BE PROVIDING SOONEST SPECIFIC NUMBERS OF ROOMS

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RESERVATIONS WHICH WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO MAKE. WE ANTICIPATE
NO RPT NO POSSIBILITY THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO OBTAIN
450 TO 500 SINGLE ROOMS. SOME DOUBLING WILL BE NECESSARY,
AND THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE PREPARED FOR THAT PROSPECT,
ALTHOUGH WE WILL TRY TO MAXIMIZE SINGLE OCCUPANCIES.

WE WILL ATTEMPT TO HOUSE THE PRESS IN CARACAS, BUT AGAIN

WE MAY HAVE TO PROPOSE SOME SPLITTING.

5. RE PARA 7F REFTTEL, WE HAVE ALREADY ARRANGED FOR TWO SUITES FOR SECRETARY VANCE AND DR BRZEZINSKI AT THE CARACAS HILTON, WHICH WILL BE WHERE ALL OR THE MAJOR PORTION OF THE OFFICIAL PARTY WILL BE LOCATED.

6. RE PARA 8 REFTTEL, WEEK OF MARCH 28 TO 26 WILL BE AN EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TIME TO ACCOMPLISH ASSIGNMENTS. GOVERNMENT OFFICES, BUSINESSES AND MEDIA BEGIN CLOSING AT THE BEINNING OF HOLY WEEK, AND EVERYTHING IS TIGHTLY SHUT DOWN FROM HOLY THURSDAY THROUGH EASTER SUNDAY. HOLY THURSDAY AND GOOD FRIDAY ARE OFFICIAL HOLIDAYS AND NOT EVEN NEWSPAPERS NOR TV FUNCTION ON THOSE DAYS. THE SITUATION IS FURTHER COMPLICATED BY THE FACT THAT PRINCE CHARLES OF GREAT BRITAIN WILL BE HERE ON A STATE VSIT FROM MARCH 15 TO 22, (CARACAS 540) FURTHER OCCUPYING ATTENTION OF PROTOCOL AND GOV.
VAKY

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